

Message Text

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MARCH 4, 1974.

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TAGS: PINT UK (N.I.)

SUBJECT: LOYALIST LANDSLIDE IN NI

SUMMARY: LOYALISTS TOOK 11 OF NI'S 12 SEATS IN UK GENERAL ELECTION. SDLP'S GERRY FITT WAS ONLY PRO-SUNNINGDALE WINNER. THREE OF LOYALIST VICTORIES AIDED BY VOTE-SPLITTING AMONG PRO-SUNNINGDALE CANDIDATES. COMPARED WITH 1973 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS THERE WAS SWING OF AROUND 13 PERCENT TO LOYALISTS FROM PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONISTS. SDLP DID AS WELL AS IN 1973 LOSING SOME TO REPUBLICAN CRITICS BUT GAINING IT BACK FROM OTHER PRO-SUNNINGDALE VOTERS. LOYALISTS HAD 51 PERCENT OF TOTAL VOTES VAST THEY TOGETHER WITH REPUBLICANS CONSTITUED ANTI-SUNNINGDALE MAJORITY OF 60 PERCENT. END SUMMARY

1. (LOYALIST) UNITED ULSTER UNIONISTS WON 11 OF NORTHERN IRELANDS 12 WESTMINSTER PARLIAMENTARY SEATS AND MORE THAN HALF THE TOTAL VOTE IN FEBRUARY 28 GENERAL ELECTION. SDLP LEADER GERRY FITT NARROWLY RETAINING BELFAST WEST WAS ONLY PRO-SUNNINGDALE FIGURE TO WITHSTAND LOYALIST TIDE.

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2. WINNER IN EACH CONSTITUENCY WAS AS FOLLOWS:-

ANTRIM NORTHERN -- INCUMBENT UUU/DUP IAN PAISLEY RETURNED WITH 27,631 MAJORITY.

ANTRIM SOUTH -- INCUMBENT UUU/UICA/OU JAMES MOLYNEAUX RETURNED WITH MAJORITY OF 35,644 TARGET IN UK.

BELFAST NORTH -- UUU/OU COUNCILLOR JAMES CARSON UPSET FAVORED PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONIST DAVID SMITH BY 8,776 THANKS TO THREE-WAY SPLIT IN PRO-SUNNINGDALE VOTE.

BELFAST EAST -- UUU/VANGUARD LEADER WILLIAM CRAIG UPSET INCUMBENT PRO-ASSEMBLY OFFICIAL UNIONIST STANLEY MCMASTER BY 7,740 AGAIN AIDED BY THREE-WAY SPLIT IN PRO-SUNNINGDALE VOTE.

BELFAST SOUTH -- UUU/VANGUARD REV. ROBERT BRADFORD STUNNED PRO-ASSEMBLY OFFICIAL UNIONIST INCUMBENT RAFTON POUNDER BY 3,998 THANKS AGAIN TO VOTE-SPLITTING INTERVENTION OF ALLIANCE NI LABOUR AND SDLP CANDIDATES.

BELFAST WEST -- INCUMBENT SDLP CANDIDATE GERRY FITT DESPITE VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN BY TWO REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES EDGED OUT UUU/DU CHALLENGER JOHN MCQUADE BY 2,180. SOME ABSTENTION BY PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONISTS MAY HAVE HELPED FITT.

DOWN NORTH -- INCUMBENT UUU/OU JAMES KILFEDDER TROUNCED PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONIST ENVIRONMENT MINISTER ROY BRADFORD BY 16,226 VOTES.

DOWN SOUTH -- INCUMBENT UUU/OU LAWRENCE ORR WON BY 5,602 OVER SDLP'S SEAN HOLLYWOOD. ORR'S MARGIN APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY BRIAN FAULKNER'S CALL FOR PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONISTS TO ABSTAIN.

ARMAGH -- UUU/OU HAROLD MCCUSKER HAD 15,104 MAJORITY OVER SDLP'S PADDY O'HANLON.

FERMANAGH / SOUTH TYRONE -- UUU/OU LEADER HARRY WEST WON BY 10,629 OVER REPUBLICAN UNITY INCUMBENT FRANK MCMANUS THANKS TO SDLP INTERVENTION AGAINST MCMANUS WHICH DREW MORE VOTES AWAY FROM HIM THAN PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONIST DID FROM WEST.

MID-ULSTER -- UUU/VANGUARDS JOHN DUNLOP HAD 6,672 EDGE OVER SDLP COMMUNITY RELATIONS MINISTER IVAN COOPER WHO RAN JUST AHEAD OF INCUMBENT INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST BERNADETTE DEVLIN MCALISKEY.

LONDONDERRY -- UUU/OU WILLIAM ROSS HAD 9,390 MARGIN OVER SDLP ASSEMBLY HUGH LOGUE.

3. PERFORMANCE OF INDIVIDUAL PARTIES FOLLOWS:

UUU- 366,703 VOTES 51 PERCENT OF TOTAL VOTE UP AT LEAST
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100,000 OR 13 PERCENT FROM JUNE 1973 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. WINNERS INCLUDED SEVEN ULSTER UNIONISTS THREE VANGUARD AND ONE DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST. PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONISTS -- 94,301 VOTES, ABOUT 13 PERCENT FROM 1973. THEY HAD ONLY SEVEN CANDIDATES OF WHOM TWO LOST DEPOSITS. ALLIANCE -- 22,660 VOTES ABOUT THREE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VOTE DOWN ABOUT 44,000 AND SIX PERCENT FROM 1973 ALLIANCE DID AS WELL AS LAST YEAR IN THE THREE SEATS IT CONTESTED. TWO CANDIDATES LOST DEPOSITS. NORTHERN IRELAND

LABOUR -- 17,279 ABOUT 2.5 PER CENT OF TOTAL VOTE MUCH THE SAME AS 1973. ONLY DAVID BLEAKLEY IN EAST BELFAST SAVED DEPOSIT THREE OTHER OFFICIAL CANDIDATES AND ONE UNOFFICIAL LOST THEIRS. SDLP -- 160,437 VOTES OF 22 PERCENT OF TOTAL SAME AS 1973. PARTY LOST VOTES TO TWO REPUBLICAN INCUMBENTS BUT GAINED SOME FROM 1973 ALLIANCE VOTERS AND PERHAPS EVEN PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONIST SUPPORTERS IN CONSTITUENCIES WHERE SDLP REPRESENTED ONLY PRO-SUNNINGDALE ALTERNATIVE TO UUUC. FIVE OF PARTY'S 12 CANDIDATES LOST DEPOSITS. REPUBLICAN CLUBS -- 31,822 VOTES OR FOUR PER CENT OF TOTAL UP 18,000 AND TWO PERCENT FROM 1973. THISIMPROVEMENT WAS HOWEVER ALMOST ENTIRELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO BERNADETTE IN MID-ULSTER. OTHER FOUR CANDIDATES LOST DEPOSIT. OTHER ANTI-SUNNINGDALE REPUBLICANS -- 24,417 VOTES OR TWO PERCENT OF TOTAL TWO-THIRDS OF THIS NUMBER REPRESENTED VOTE FOR INCUMBENT MCMANUS IN FERMANAGH - SOUTH TYRONE. FIGURES NOT COMPARABLE WITH 1973 WHEN PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN CALLED FOR ABSTENTION AND BALLOT SPOILING. THREE OR FOUR CANDIDATES LOST DEPOSITS.

4. TOTAL ANTI-SUNNINGDALE VOTE (UUUC AND REPUBLICANS) WAS 422,942 OR 60 PERCENT. PRO-SUNNINGDALE VOTE (PRO-ASSEMBLY UNIONISTS ALLIANCE NI LABOUR AND SDLP) AS 295,898 OR 40 PERCENT PENBERTHY

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